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Advancement of women

Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003

Future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

Summary

By draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1, the General Assembly would endorse the recommendation made by the Working Group on the Future Operations of the International Research and Training Institute for Women (INSTRAW) and would request the Secretary-General to implement the measures recommended by the Working Group in that regard (A/57/330).

The amount of $500,000 from the regular budget 2002-2003 which would be entailed by the provisions of the draft resolution would not be sufficient to enable INSTRAW to continue its operations even at the current minimum level. Nor is it anticipated that the resources required to enable INSTRAW to operate in 2003 could be provided using existing resources approved in the regular programme budget for 2002-2003. The additional requirements of $500,000 would therefore represent a charge against the contingency fund and would be subject to the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211. The additional amount of $1,309,500 should be provided from voluntary contributions.

At its 51st meeting, on 15 November 2002, the Third Committee, by a recorded vote, adopted draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1. The statement of programme budget implications of that resolution is contained in document A/C.3/57/L.82.

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I. Introduction

1. Under operative paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1, the General Assembly would endorse the recommendation made by the Working Group on the Future Operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and would request the Secretary-General to implement the measures recommended by the Working Group in this regard (see A/57/330, para. 57).

2. In paragraph 57 of its report (A/57/330), the Working Group recommended the linkage of INSTRAW to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. In that connection, the Working Group recommended that the following measures, inter alia, be adopted:

(a) Inviting the Economic and Social Council to amend the statute of INSTRAW in accordance with paragraphs 52, 53, and 55 of the report of the Working Group;

(b) Allocating an amount of $500,000 from the regular budget of the United Nations to finance the core activities of the Institute so as to give it the same status as other institutes of the United Nations system;

(c) Examining the feasibility of establishing an advisory board composed of Member States to replace the Board of Trustees;

(d) Creating the post of Deputy Director with specific fund-raising responsibilities;

(e) Establishing a liaison for INSTRAW in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

II. Background

3. It is recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 55/219 of 23 December 2000 decided, in view of the difficult financial situation of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), to provide it with financial assistance on a non-recurrent basis and, by its decision 55/457 of 23 December 2000, to advance the Institute up to $800,000 for 2001 pending receipt of voluntary contributions on a one-time exceptional and emergency basis. By the same decision, the General Assembly also decided that, if voluntary contributions were insufficient to meet the Institute's requirements for 2001, only an advance up to $800,000, less voluntary contributions received, would be considered a one-time only subvention and that the resources utilized under the terms of that subvention would be reported in the context of the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

4. By paragraph 3 of its resolution 56/240 A of 24 December 2001, the General Assembly decided, in the light of the critical financial situation of INSTRAW, to retain in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, $650,000 of the original provision of $800,000 made pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/219 of 23 December 2000, and requested the Secretary-General to disburse the provision in December 2001 as a subvention to be credited to the United Nations

Trust Fund for the Institute, so as to ensure the continuation of its operations in 2002.

5. By paragraph 4 (a) of its resolution 56/125 of 19 December 2001, the General Assembly decided to establish a working group composed of two governmental representatives from each of the five regional groups of the United Nations and one representative of the host country, the mandate of the working group being to make recommendations to the General Assembly before the end of the fifty-sixth session, for its consideration by the end of 2002 on the future operation of the Institute.

6. The report of the working group on the future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was submitted to the General Assembly in documents A/57/330 and Add.1. The provisions of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1 referred to above reflect the recommendations of the Working Group as contained in its report. In his note on the situation of INSTRAW submitted in accordance with rule 112 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/57/452), the Secretary-General indicated, inter alia, that the provision to INSTRAW of $500,000 from the regular budget to finance its core activities, as recommended by the working group, would be sufficient to cover only the salaries and common staff costs of the four Professional posts (1 D-2, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2/1) currently on the staffing table of INSTRAW for one year, with no funds remaining to cover supporting operating expenses. It was estimated in the note that approximately $1,400,000 per year would be needed to fund the Institute's activities at the minimum level.

III. Current financial situation

7. In 2002, the financial situation of the Institute remained precarious. While voluntary contributions amounted to $312,396 in 2001, only $93,707 had been received as of 18 November 2002. Taking into account that the subvention of $650,000 was credited to the United Nations Trust Fund for INSTRAW in December 2001 and bearing in mind expenditures incurred in 2002 together with resources required for liquidation costs in the event of the Institute being closed down, there could remain a balance of only $100,000 for the operations of the Institute as of 1 January 2003.

IV. Additional requirements arising from the draft resolution

8. Taking into account all current provisions of paragraph 57 of the report of the Working Group, it is estimated that the total amount of $1,809,500 per year would be needed in this regard. The elements to be funded from this amount are as follows: (a) $500,000 for the four current Professional posts (1 D-2, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2/1); (b) $176,000 for the new post of Deputy Director; (c) $285,000 for the four current General Service posts; (d) $208,500 per annum to provide for minimal administrative resource requirements, including general operating expenses; (e) $400,000 to enable the Institute to carry out minimal substantive activities, including consultancy and travel, and for general temporary assistance resources; and (f) $240,000 for a liaison unit in New York, including the annual cost of one Professional and one General Service posts ($202,800) and, inter alia, rental of office space, equipment, supplies, materials and travel resources ($37,200).

9. There are no resources under the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 that could be made available to finance INSTRAW operations in 2003. If the General Assembly decides to allocate $500,000 to enable the Institute to continue its operations in 2003, this amount will therefore need to be provided through an additional appropriation in the context of the operations of the contingency fund, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. The additional amount of $1,309,500 should be provided from as yet unidentified voluntary contributions.

10. In paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, the Economic and Social Council would be requested to amend the statute of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, where necessary, in order to permit the implementation of the measures contained in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the draft resolution. As indicated in the note by the Secretary-General (A/57/452), special attention should be given to the need to clarify the full implications of the terms "liaison" and "linkage" with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. This is particularly necessary as regards the roles, liabilities and responsibilities of both the Department and INSTRAW, as well as the question of resource implications resulting from such linkage. Consideration should be given to the changes that would need to be made to the statute of the Institute, and to clarifying the role of the Director and the proposed advisory board.

V. Potential for absorption during the biennium 2002-2003

11. There are no resources under the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 that could be made available to finance INSTRAW operations in 2003. Furthermore, it is not possible for the Secretary-General to indicate which activities could be terminated, curtailed or modified so as to use the released resources to finance the operations of INSTRAW in 2003, in full or in part. Any amount that the General Assembly may decide to allocate to enable the Institute to continue its operations in 2003 would therefore need to be provided through an additional appropriation.

VI. Contingency fund

12. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, a contingency fund is established each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the approved programme budget. Under that procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources that are available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through the redeployment of resources available from low-priority areas or the modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

13. Under the procedure for operation of the contingency fund outlined in part C of the annex to General Assembly resolution 42/211, the Secretary-General would, in his consolidated statement of all revised estimates and statements of programme budget implications, make proposals for revising the total amount so that it would not exceed the available balance. In so doing, the Secretary-General would be

guided by the indications of alternatives included in each statement of programme budget implications and in each proposal for revised estimates. The respective legislative bodies should take action on such alternatives at the time they adopt the decision or resolution in question.

VII. Summary

14. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1, that decision would give rise to additional requirements of $500,000 for the biennium 2002-2003 under section 9, Economic and social affairs. The provision would represent a potential charge against the contingency fund, which would need to be considered in the context of the consolidated statement to be presented to the Fifth Committee at the end of the current session. A separate provision, amounting to $1,309,500, over and above the regular budget resources under section 9, Economic and social affairs, would need to be provided from as yet unidentified voluntary contributions.**